

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SS-15 RSC-01

CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 AID-20 H-03 IGA-02 L-03 OMB-01

DRC-01 EB-11 TRSE-00 /102 W
----- 103757

R 150940Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3007

CJCS

SECDEF

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

COMUSSAG

S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 9834

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, CB

SUBJECT: RECRUITING PROGRAM FOR THE FANK VENERAL RESERVE

REF: PHNOM PENH 9634

1. GENERAL CLELAND, POL. MIL COUNSELOR GARDNER, THEIR ASSISTANTS AND I MET THIS MORNING WITH THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL DEFENSE COUNCIL CHAIRED BY THE PRIME MINISTER TO DISCUSS OUR PROPOSALS TO AUGMENT THE MANPOWER OF THE GENERAL RESERVES. THE KHMER PARTICIPANTS SURFACED ALL THE RESERVATIONS WE KNOW THEM TO HAVE AND LISTENED ATTENTIVELY TO OUR COUNTER ARGUMENTS.

2. IN TAM WAS FLANED BY MINISTER OF DEFENSE, MV U SAY. WHO DID MOST OF THE TALKING, MINISTER OF INTERIOR HEM KETHSANA, MINISTER TO PUBLIC WORKS MG THAPPANA NGINN AND FANK DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF MG THONGVAN FANMUONG, CHIEF OF STAFF SOSTEHEN FERNANDEZ'S ABSENCE WAS A DIS-
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APPOINTMENT BUT DURING A DISCUSSION I HAD WITH HIM THE

PREVIOUS EVENING, HE AGREED TO SEND MG FANMUONG.

3. U SAY SPOKE AGAINST SETTING A TARGET FOR ACCESSIONS, ARGUING THAT EFFORTS SHOULD INSTEAD BE CENTERED AT MAINTAINING THE OVERALL STRENGTH FIGURE OF 253,000. WITH THE HELP OF A CHART PREPARED BY MEDTC WE POINTED OUT THAT FANK PERSONNEL FIGURES DID NOT ACCURATELY REFLECT RECENT LOSSES AND EMPHASIZED THAT RECRUITMENT AND CONSCRIPTION CAMPAIGNS COULD NOT AWAIT THE RECONCILIATION OF FANK PERSONNEL ACCOUNTING WITH ACTUAL TROOP STRENGTH.

4. WE REVIEWED THE SUGGESTIONS SET FORTH IN MY LETTER TO LON NOL, EMPHASIZING FIRST THE NEED FOR A FREE RICE ALLOTMENT OR A SIMILAR INCENTIVE TO STIMULATE RECRUITMENT. IN TAM INDICATED HE WOULD ACCEPT THIS MEASURE IF A BUDGETARY INCREASE WAS NOT INVOLVED. WE DEMONSTRATED THAT 30,000 ACCESSIONS WOULD STILL LEAVE A GAP BETWEEN ACTUAL STRENGTH AND THE 253,000 CEILING MORE THAN SUFFICIENT TO FINANCE SUCH A PROGRAM. WHEN U SAY POINTED TO THE NEED TO FULFILL THE MARSHALL'S PLEDGE TO PAY THE MILITARY PROMOTION BACK PAY AMOUNTING TO 1.7 BILLION RIEL, WE ARGUED THAT THIS MEASURE SHOULD BE POSTPONED IN FULL OR AT LEAST IN PART IN ORDER TO GIVE PRIORITY TO THE MORE CRITICAL PROBLEM OF TROOP ACCESSIONS. IT WAS AGREED THAT FANK J-1 WOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO ACCELERATE THE PURGE OF THE ROLLS SO THAT THE RICE ALLOWANCE COULD BE FINANCED WITHOUT INCREASING THE DEFENSE BUDGET.

5. WE REVIEWED THE ARGUMENTS FOR LOWERING THE DRAFT AGE TO 18. IN TAM EXPRESSED A DESIRE TO FIND OUT FIRST WHETHER THE 25-35 AGE GROUP COULD SUPPLY THE REQUIRED NUMBERS BUT SAID THAT HE WOULD ON THIS ISSUE SEEK THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PROPOSED JOINT STAFF.

6. WE STRESSED AGAIN THAT THE CHIEF OF THIS JOINT STAFF MUST BE A TOP FLIGHT ADMINISTRATOR OF NATIONAL STATURE, U SAY SUGGESTED THAT HE MIGHT SOON HAVE SOME PROPOSALS IN THIS REGARD AND IN TAM INDICATED THAT HE WOULD ASK FOR SIRIK MATAK'S SUGGESTION.

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7. IN SUMMARY, WE MADE VERY CLEAR THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH WE VIEW THE LACK OF PROGRESS IN MEETING FANK'S MANPOWER NEEDS AND OUR ARGUMENTS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION RECEIVED A GOOD HEARING FROM IN TAM AS WELL AS FROM THE OTHERS. WE SHOULD HAVE A BETTER IDEA OF THE IMPACT WE MADE WHEN WE HAVE DECISIONS ON (1) THE APPOINTMENT OF A CHIEF OF THE PROPOSED JOINT STAFF, AND (2) THE FINANCING OF A FREE RICE ALLOTMENT. I AM

FOLLOWING UP WITH SIRIK MATAK THIS AFTERNOON.
ENDERS

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NNN

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